PLO’s Locomotive of Retreat

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

1974

PLO's Locomotive of Retreat

> Although we greatly appreciate the efforts made by the U.N. and the Moral and Political value of its resolutions, we have no illusions about their practical effects.
>
> — Amilear Cabral

It is the right of every revolutionary national liberation movement to choose all available avenues to propagate the cause of its people. As such, Yasser Arafat's appearance in front of the U.N. in itself is not objectionable, on the contrary, it indicates that the vehicle used to bring the P.L.O. there, namely armed struggle was the chief reason for this diplomatic success. Hence we postulate that it is this same vehicle which must not be abandoned in order to advance and develop the Palestinian resistance movement.

It is obvious to all that we are presently confronted with new crossroads compounded by difficult obstacles that can be over come only through clarity of thought and commitment to increasing the potential of our masses to develop a veritable people's movement.

What are the historical conditions under which Arafat and the P.L.O. have been paraded as the leaders of the Palestinian people? Under present conditions, is such a minor victory in contradiction with Imperialist Reactionary-Zionist strategy?

The emergence of the Faisal–Sadat axis of power has been predicated on the dissolution of Arab progressivism and the development of a strong Arab right wing. In view of the results of the October war, this new reactionary axis has sought to resolve the so called Middle East conflict by overtly identifying national policy with imperialist interests in the region. To do so, all necessary measures have been taken, and are being taken to stem the tide of revolution and to forge the capitalist road of development. Practically, this means that the imperialist strategy in the Middle East is translated through the programs of the emergence of an unholy alliance, Israel–Iran–Saudi Arabia (Sadat).

Whereas the latter has declared a holy opposition to Zionism, they in fact are of the opinion that a settlement with Israel is a must so as to thwart radical

developments in the Arab East and the Arab gulf. Moreover, Sadat's strategy is based on dependence of incoming oil capital from Saudi Arabia and increasing penetration of imperialist capital. This produces the stabilization of the Arab East, resulting in Saudi Arabia's insistence on Egyptian–Syrian–Israeli negotiations.

Already certain steps have been achieved ranging from disengagement agreements to actual recognition on the part of Sadat of Israel's right to exist as a Zionist expansionist entity, hence overtly negating the right of the Palestinians to self-determination. However, to succeed in their "peace" efforts, Palestinian participation is not only needed but is essential for the success of the above-mentioned strategy.

It became clear that after the October war, Sadat and Faisal led a diplomatic offensive to gain international respectability for the P.L.O. The success of such an offensive was dependent on the stripping of the P.L.O. of its revolutionary content, hence producing a neatly packaged moderate organization willing at some point and time in the near future to renounce armed struggle — the revolutionary path. Initially the above was achieved as Arafat and Hawatmeh accepted the proposed Palestinian state (West Bank and Gaza), but they camouflaged their retreat by labeling it "National Authority".

Once the process of retreat had begun, small victories such as P.L.O. admission in FAO and UNESCO were pictured as strategic victories, and not as token gifts for P.L.O. deviation from the revolutionary path, which in fact was the price for these "victories".

Then came the Arab summit at Rabat where the P.L.O. led by Arafat gained respectability and was officially declared the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Hussein signed over the West Bank to the P.L.O. as Faisal promised him 300 million dollars to develop and fortify Jordan. In turn, Arafat conceded to curtail attempts of toppling Hussein which was the foundation upon which reconciliation between the P.L.O. and Hussein was achieved.

Recently (mid-December 1974) Abou Lutuf (head of the P.L.O.'s political committee) and the Democratic Fronts newspaper Al-Hurriya either urged the speedy convening of the mini-Arab summit (Egypt–Syria–Jordan–P.L.O.) or questioned its delay. Clearly this negates the resistance movement's identification of Hussein as an essential part of the enemy and their previous policy of "no negotiation or reconciliation" with Hussein — which was integral in the unified minimum points of agreement. It is to be noted that the mini-Arab summit is the framework through which the P.L.O. leadership

and the Jordanian regime will crystallize their reconciliation.

Having stripped the P.L.O. of its revolutionary content Faisal in his kingly manner offered Arafat 50 million dollars to accelerate the road to retreat and to prevent agitation on the part of the P.L.O. against Arab reaction in the Gulf. A New York Times writer captures the spirit of the developments: "He pacified the Palestinians for the moment by granting them the metaphysical right to resolve their own future." (New York Times, Dec. 8, 1974).

Having declared Arafat king, Arab reaction was entrusted with the task of convincing Imperialism of the need to recognize the P.L.O. and in turn to pressure Israel to follow the same course.

Aharon Yariv in July 1974 declared that Israel might negotiate with the P.L.O. if it renounced terrorism and accepted the right of Israel to exist. (Though he was reprimanded, the importance of the statement is clear.) Later, Israeli Ambassador to Washington Simcha Dinitz readily conceded that U.S. pressure on Israel to negotiate with the P.L.O. is unfolding. His statement was preceded by the words of U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., John Scali "Palestinian interests must be woven into the give and take of the negotiating process."

The locomotive of retreat, once in motion, can only gain momentum, but the main agents for its acceleration is the aforementioned reactionary Faisal–Sadat axis whose post Rabat strategy can be summarized in the following:

1. Application of pressure on Washington to recognize the P.L.O., while soberly reminding the U.S. of the oil weapon and the possibility (however remote) of future price decreases;
2. Keep the Soviet Union out by a complete attachment of Arab policy to the Imperialist bandwagon;
3. Attempts to secure further Israeli withdrawals from Sinai and the Golan.

As regards (a), recently Ismail Fahmi, Egypt's Foreign Minister declared that after Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories post-1967 and the establishment of the Palestinian state (West Bank and Gaza) Israel must pay indemnities to the Palestinians for the past 26 years. In so doing, he has reiterated Egypt's recognition of the Zionist state and has negated the Palestinians right to return to their homeland pre-1948. He also for bargaining purposes, stipulated the need for a moratorium on Jewish immigration. **What counts is that Arafat, in acting in concert with the Faisal–Sadat axis is in fact relinquishing the people's right to liberation and self-determination, the price for being heralded as a leader. This process is forcing the P.L.O. to abandon its original goals of liberation**

by tacitly agreeing to co-exist with Israel.

Concerning (b), already before Brezhnev's visit to Egypt, Sadat publically declared his full confidence in Kissinger's previously stated promises.

As regards (c), Yigal Allon's outlining of Israeli strategy while in Washington might elucidate a few things (Dec. 12, 1974). The policy is summarized in the following: 1) Strengthening of Israeli armed forces and drawing lessons from the October war 1973 — and prepare for all contingencies; 2) Search for "peace", and the possibility of reaching an agreement with the neighboring Arab countries.

First, both Israel and Sadat are interested in negotiation. Second, Israeli intransigence as regards the P.L.O. will diminish as the Faisal–Sadat axis succeeds in further stripping the P.L.O. of its revolutionary content. **The latter might come with the formation of a provisional Palestinian government in the near future whose members might be "distinguished" Palestinians with no revolutionary past. As our analysis indicates, the P.L.O. will be part of a team formed by the Rabat Arab Summit Conference (Egypt, Syria, Jordan, P.L.O.) and as such the political basis of its participation will be contained in the framework of Arab capitulation led by the reactionary Faisal–Sadat axis.**

Upon gaining "respectability", the P.L.O. and Arafat would slowly yield in to Yaris's stipulations and Israel would uneasily recognize a bourgeois oriented P.L.O. by retreating from its policy of "never", reminiscent of Thieu's "never" to negotiations with the North Vietnamese and the PRG.

Each "victory" declared by the P.L.O., in fact is only one step further towards the sentinel state i.e., the Palestinian graveyard.

Our task now is to differentiate between certain diplomatic gains and the utilization of these gains to accelerate the process of retreat. There is only one way: Develop our struggle in the occupied territories, form a Jordanian–Palestinian united front and a wider Arab front to not only liberate Palestine but to in fact undermine the reactionary Faisal–Sadat axis.

— Dec. 22, 1974.

The Ghassan Kanafani Operation

Weeks after Arafat's appearance at the United Nations Palestinian commando activity, has gained momentum. Israeli terror has also increased. Israeli terror has employed aerial bombing against Palestinian refugee camps (Dec. 12), or rocket attacks against P.L.O. offices (Dec. 10).

It is important to note that we have resolved to do all that is necessary to respond to Zionist terror. As such, the Ghassan Kana fani operation led by our fallen comrade and martyr Mothafar in the heart of Tel Aviv at Diyogov Square inside Cinema Heen is a testimony to our commitment.

At 10:10 p.m. before the explosions took place, comrade Mothafar declared: "There will be no peace on our land unless the Zionist entity is negated, to be replaced by a democratic society on all of Palestine."

Casualties were high, amongst them of course was Mothafar.

What is the nature of this operation?

The Ghassan Kanafani operation was a "Special Operation" whose aim was to strike in the midst of Zionism's busiest centers. "Special Operations" are not a substitute for guerilla warfare waged by our people, in which daily losses would be imposed on the enemy. However, in view of the objective conditions that face our people and plague the Zionist leadership, operations of this nature tend to increase the fears of the people and induce them to question the viability of the Zionist entity. In addition, it increases Jewish emigration out of Israel and decreases the incoming immigration. Furthermore, it increases distrust on the part of the Jewish population towards their government. Simply put, "special operations" carried out at a time when the Zionist entity suffers from a severe economic crisis, in fact, psychologically batters the Zionist enemy and in turn induces our people with the spirit of struggle, which after all, is one of our principle objectives of this stage of our struggle.

Moreover, we are quite aware of the limitations of such a method. After all our experiences in Gaza taught us that due to our close relationship with our masses, we did in fact control the region for a period of time.

Nevertheless, the Ghassan Kanafani operation has had some very specific results: A) We have disproved the Zionist claim that we cannot penetrate the interior of Israel — three of the comrades who participated in the operation are part of our permanent organization in the occupied territories and still remain at large; B) This means that our masses will protect us which is added arsenal to our revolutionary potential. C) When A and B are taken together, we postulate the need to continue building our organizational framework under occupation — a process already in motion.

Israel's immediate response other than a general pessimistic mood was the instituting of some changes in the government and army, most important of which was the appointment of General Sharon to a high position in the reserves. Sharon, a leading figure of the right wing Lihud Coalition and advocate of "continuous war against terrorism" has been entrusted with the task of conducting the "special operations" division of Israel. Previously, Sharon had been responsible for the counter-insurgency operations against the Palestinian resistance movement in Gaza. His appointment to such an important position indicates that the Rabin government is determined to increase its terror against the Palestinian people.

Sharon's theory of "continuous warfare" entails: 1) Striking the "terrorists" everywhere in Israel, the Arab countries, Europe and all over; 2) Such operations instead of being sporadic, have to be part of a day in, day out strategy whose aim is the killing of Palestinian commandos; 3) Continuous strikes against southern Lebanon so as to clear the area of its inhabitants or at least to impose routine search and if necessary destroy operations up to the area south of the Lihani river. The above's intention is to place obstacles for the resistance movement.

Moreover, Israeli policy aims at striking the known offices of the resistance movement so as to stop their activities and force them to be pre-occupied solely with self-defense.

As Israel proceeds with its strategy of terror, they have yet to figure out a strategy of stopping our penetration into the heart of Tel Aviv. As such, Israel cannot stop the successful work conducted by comrades such as our fallen martyred hero Mothafar. For he is our antidote to Israeli terror and its success can be measured by the wide support of our masses and the increasing pressures placed on the Israeli government which is causing its further weakening, accompanied by the strengthening of our organizational bases under occupation.

War or Retreat?

The drums of war were played once more in the Middle East. The recent speculations of war came after reports mentioned that a partial military mobilization was underway in Israel. The recent pretext was the scheduled expiration of the mandate of the UN Disengagement Observation Force (UNDOF) on November 30th: Now the mandate has been renewed for another six months. This exaggeration of the possibility of a fifth war by the Arab press intended to divert the attention of the Arab masses from the real efforts made to reach a settlement.

Israeli leaders concentrated their vocal fire on Syria, and Defense Minister Shimon Perez said Israel should take Syrian "**threats of war seriously**." He failed to say as to when Syria made these threats. On the other hand Henry Kissinger, addressing a news conference in Washington on Nov. 15th, said "**I don't think war is likely**" in the Middle East. He said reports of military buildups in the regime were exaggerated and that he "**can not believe that any parties in the Middle East would result to war in these circumstances.!" Indeed Kissinger's statement expresses the mood among the Arab regimes, who have managed to convince themselves that the October war was a "victory on all levels" and that there is no need for another war. The basis of their conviction is their own policy to resort to the negotiating table under the sponsored plan for a settlement in the region.**

Quite the opposite feeling prevails among the masses — particularly the Syrian masses who are convinced that another war is necessary especially as Israeli leaders continue to declare their intention not to withdraw from the Golan Heights and that they will not dismantle the settlements they had built in the occupied territories.

All of this took place after the Seventh Arab Summit Conference which convened in Rabat, Morocco. The conference was dubbed as "**the Palestinian Summit**", because the head of the states agreed to a resolution upholding the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the "**sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian with the right to establish an independent Palestinian national entity on all Palestinian territories which may be recovered from Israel.**" As a result a complete detente

between the PLO leadership and hireling Hussein of Jordan was declared. This period (after the October War) of inter-Arab leaders reconciliation, is witnessing the reconciliation of the PLO leadership with Hussein, who was described once by Yasser (Abu Ammar) Arafat, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, as the "**murderer of more than 30,000 of our people**." Indeed such a development in the position of so claimed revolutionaries has a historic character because it sets the stage for the necessary containment of part of the resistance movement. An aim imperialism and Arab reaction have been trying to achieve since the first operation after the 1967, June War. This dramatic development comes as no surprise, inspite of the previous positions declared by the PLO leadership rejecting PLO–Jordanian regime reconciliation.

Since the October War the PLO leadership has been advocating the idea of the "Palestinian state" on the West Bank and Gaza. The purpose of bringing in the PLO on the account of Hussein, is the willingness of the capitulating regimes to show that Arab ranks can be united — (as reactionary as Faisal and as "revolutionary" as Abu Ammar) and as such U.S. assistance should be granted to this wide front of Arab leaders who are seeking a political settlement. This is all done with the slogan "that the period of reconciliation runs counter radicalism" and as one Democratic Front leader said "the settlement is taking place with us or without us, we are better off part of it." Again we witness the PLO leadership adopting the positions contrary to those stated in the Palestine National Charter and the resolutions of the PLO National Councils. **The resolution in Rabat calls on the PLO to "exercise its responsibilities on the Arab and international levels within Arab commitments!" It also adds the following: "Inviting the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Egyptian Arab Republic and the PLO to lay down the formula for organizing relations…**"

Such statements need little comment on the PLO policy, as part of Faisal–Sadat policy at this stage — less comment probably on the reconciliation with the Jordanian regime.

If the period is one of reconciliation on all levels, what then are the motives behind the war talk.

On the Israeli level the talk about war is necessary to reestablish the morale of the Israeli military after the results of the October War. This appears clearly in Perez statement regarding the mobilization during the last week of August, "**for the first time since the October War (the exercises) reestablished the confidence of our armed forces in themselves and in their ability to repel attacks." On the other hand Israel is using the talk**

about war and putting emphasis on Soviet arms shipments as part of the Israeli pressure to obtain additional weapons from the U.S. Although the U.S. Defense Department had leaked the news about the arrival in Syria of Soviet made MIG 23s, Washington was reported to disagree with Israel about the so-called Syrian military buildup. U.S. officials were also reported to have said that Syria was abiding by the disengagement agreement, at the time the Israelis were saying the Syrians have moved heavy mortar guns in the buffer zones in the Golan Heights, which, they said, was a violation of the ceasefire. Another weak point in the arguement about the possibility of war, is the international situation. Israel can not justify under the present circumstances an attack without a cause. Some believed that Israel would strike if and when Syria refuses to renew the mandate of the U.N. forces. But most observers predicted renewal after the talks of Syrian Foreign Minister Abdel Halim Khaddam with President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger, which were described as constructive! Nor would the U.S. be pleased with an Israeli attack under the present conditions — at least not before the chances of the Geneva Conference are tested.

This is why military moves and pronouncements were meant to show each other how strong the other side is in advance of the Geneva conference.

Inspite of that, and from a psychological point of view, the majority of Israelis are in favor of another war that would restore their confidence in the ability of their state to ensure the security of Israel. This confidence had been shattered by the October War and the continued operations of the resistance. All of a sudden the Israeli citizen discovered that neither himself nor his “country” were secure.

From the economic point of view, another prolonged war between Israel and the Arabs is going to be detrimental to the Israeli economy irrespective of the economic and financial assistance that may be obtained from abroad.

Considering these factors, the Israeli government is putting the Israeli citizen infront of two choices, either a war with no guarantees to its results along with severe economic consequences, or a settlement according the wishes of the U.S. Actually, this policy is being applied by the ruling clique in Israel and the actions manifested themselves in the devaluation of the Israeli pound, which was later followed by a huge loan from the U.S. The choice in Israel in between Israeli arrogance or U.S. imperialism policy of step by step domination.

It is apparent that playing the war drums was carried out on the Arab side to cover the following events:

1. **PLO leadership reconciliation with hireling Hussein.**
2. **PLO leadership becoming an integral part of Faisal–Sadat axis.**
3. **The meeting of Abu Lutuf, head of the PLO political department with U.S. congressmen. Therefore taking the first step of declared PLO–U.S. contacts.**
4. **The statement of Egyptian foreign minister Hegazi, that the U.S. policy in the Middle East was in the right direction and "deserves to be welcomed and be met with responsiveness." This shows that the Egyptian regime still counts on U.S. imperialism to achieve the settlement for it.**

Playing the war drums from the Arab side aims to strengthen the "inter-Arab unity" of all reactionary and capitulating forces.

Imperialist–Reactionary Aggression Renewed in Oman

The new imperialist attack on the Arab region aims to liquidate the armed struggle fronts in the area. These are the Palestinian resistance and the revolution in Oman. While the method used to liquidate the first is dominantly political, the method used in Oman has concentrated on military actions carried out by the Iranian, British and Jordanian forces. These foreign troops are in addition to the indigenous Omani forces who are officially known as the "Sultan's Armed Forces" (SAF).

The present attack started in mid-September, lead by Iranian ground troops and airforce. The attacking forces tried to take advantage of the rainy season in order to surprise the revolutionary army during a period when most military operations are frozen. The aim of the attack was to split the liberated area (Dhofar) into two sectors, hoping to establish permanent bases there. The attack was repulsed in spite of the huge number of enemy forces mobilised for it. Once more the dream of the puppet Sultan to "end the revolution within one month", as he declared on the eve of the offensive, was shattered. The present Sultan Qaboos was brought to power in July 1970 to replace his decadent father, Sultan Said Bin Taymur. Qaboos has been devoting special attention to strengthening his armed forces. Faced with the growing, intensive and effective operations by the revolutionary forces, Qaboos has had to resort to external help more than ever. As such, the collaboration of Qaboos with the Shah of Iran was needed to save the puppet regime from complete collapse. The Shah, who is eager to strengthen his foothold in the Hermuz Straits which are crucial for oil traffic, was more than willing to move in. Of course, the Shah's aims are many: on the one hand there is the natural wealth of Oman, and on the other there is the Shah's ambition to control the Gulf after the British were forced to move their major force from the area for economic reasons.

Actually, the role of Iran is in accordance with the strategy followed by imperialism: to develop and rely on the well-supplied armies of the developing reactionary regimes. As much as the Shah derives direct interest from his troops' intervention, **European and North American imperialism**

do so in direct economic exploitation of natural resources as well. Recently, copper, tin, chrome, iron and lead of high quality were discovered in commercial quantities. The income received by Qaboos from the monopolistic companies operating there is all deployed to the military branch to pay the heavy cost of Iranian, British and Jordanian forces. Lately the British Aircraft Corporation announced that it had concluded a deal with the Qaboos regime valued at about ninety million sterling pounds for supplying a rocket network. The reaction to such deals is best expressed by a citizen of Oman who wrote to the PFLO English organ, **Saad El Thawara**, saying: "**Whenever the wealth of our country increases along with it our misery steps up together with poverty and deprivation.**"

The present situation has been developing for about one year — since December 20th, 1973, when Iranian forces started their invasion of Oman in order to save the regime of Qaboos. The armed revolution which started June 9th, 1964, found itself facing not only new and increasing military forces, but totally new conditions in a result of the discovery of raw materials mentioned above. The revolution in Oman has proved during its ten years of effective struggle that it can face new developing realities. It has done so in its historical resolutions of the second Congress in 1968, the third Congress in 1971, and the historical Akhosh Congress at the end of 1971, which united all the revolutionary forces in Oman and founded the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG). The second Congress of PFLOAG was held in August of this year. The most important decision taken in the congress was the decision to keep the branches of the PFLOAG in Oman an independent national organization under the name of the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman, while declaring the independence of PFLOAG organizations outside Oman — in the other political entities of the Arab Gulf. According to the Congress's political communique, the PFLO will have a National Action Programme, Constitution and Central Command.

The political communique confirmed that organizational independence is a task dictated by the nature of the present conditions in order to: "mobilise all Omani and Arab capabilities to face the Iranian invasion and British presence" (for excerpts, see box) The Congress saluted the heroic struggle waged by the Palestinian people to regain all Palestinian land.

On the battle front, the Iranian invasion was met by a counterattack lead by the PFLO forces in a new front at Jebal Al Akhdar (Green Mountain) area. This new front not only proved the failure of enemy forces to crush the revolution in liberated areas, but also threatened the minimum effectiveness it had offered in other regions. As such the Iranian forces reached the 30,000

man mark. This concentration of troops in the Jebal Al Akhdar area lead to the clash between the PFLO unit and Iranian, British and Jordanian forces, which resulted in the martyrdom of comrade Zaher Ali Mattar Al Miyahi (Ahmed Ali) member of the Executive Committee, highest leadership of the PFLO. (See box and pictures)

Facing the Iranian invasion and the united force of enemies taking part in the conspiracy to enforce an imperialist plan on the region, the PFLO has had to repel the continuous attempts to invade the liberated areas (Dhofar), to direct severe blows at the enemy troops stationed in different parts of Oman, and to preserve the social, political and economic set-up which the people have established in Dhofar, in spite of daily air-raids on them. Last and most important, the struggle of the Omani people under the leadership of the PFLO continues to represent a torch for the struggle of the Arab masses in general and the masses in the Arab Gulf and Peninsula in particular.

> The following are excerpts from the PFLP leadership cable to the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO).
>
> "PFLO — Central Executive Committee
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> "Allow us to express to you and the militants and fighters of the PFLO our deepest consolation for the loss of comrade Ahmad Ali, member of the PFLO Central Executive Committee.
>
> "The loss of comrade Ahmad Ali, who was a prominent militant and an example of the revolutionary Committment is also a loss to us and to the Arab revolution as a whole. Our only comfort is that his comrades will continue the struggle for the victory of the Oman and Arab masses.
>
> "Glory to the Martyr Ahmad Ali
>
> "Freedom to all Political Prisoners in Oman
>
> "Victory to the Oppressed People".

PFLO Statement

Peoples Front for the Liberation of Oman

On the evening of 29/10/1974, **a unit of the Peoples Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO)** under the command of comrade Ahmad Ali (Zaber A. M. El Myahi), member of the Central Executive Committee of

the PFLO, was approaching the town of “El Hazem” on the side of Jabel El Akhader (north of Muscat, the capital) when it clashed with a British–Iranian military force and fought an uneven fierce battle, and killed five enemy soldiers. During the clash comrade Ahmad Ali was martyred. A member of the Central Leadership comrade Saud Marzouq and two other comrades were wounded and taken prisoners. A fifth comrade managed to withdraw safely.

Immediately afterwards the hireling authorities carried out a campaign of search and arrests in many cities and villages of the area, in which two hundred persons, among them many women were arrested and charged “with aiding the revolution”.

This daring military battle that took place near the capital, proves what the authorities have always tried to conceal, that the revolutionary forces of the PFLO are capable of reaching any place in the country (Oman), and that they have made the authorities live in a permanent state of extreme panic.

At this critical period of our struggle, facing increasing foreign troops, and the major role of the Iranian reaction on our Arab land, the blood of our martyrs demonstrates the determination of our masses to liberate the homeland from the tribal rulers in Muscat, and from the British–Iranian–Jordanian military presence.

The PFLO strongly warns the hireling regime in Muscat against torturing or assassinating the wounded or imprisoned comrades. Any such action will be met with strong retaliation from our side. The traitors will not escape the punishment of the masses.

THE PFLO CALLS ON ALL REVOLUTIONARY, PROGRESSIVE, AND DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN THE WORLD TO CARRY OUT A WIDE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE LIVES OF THE WOUNDED AND IMPRESSED COMRADES IN THE JAILS OF THE REACTIONARY AUTHORITIES.

LONG LIVE THE ARMED REVOLUTION IN OMAN!

LONG LIVE OUR MASSES STRUGGLE!

PEOPLES FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF OMAN 12/11/1974.

MARTYR AHMAD ALI

- The martyr was born in 1941 in the city of Tanouf, near Jabel El

Akhdar in Oman interior. He comes from a very poor peasant family. After their house was bombed by British planes in 1957, the family moved to Barket el Mouz in Oman interior.

- After the 1957 revolt was aborted, he left to (Saoudi Arabia), where he was a worker at Dahran airport for two years.
- He participated in the revolt of Imam Ghaeb and tried to organize guerrilla warfare against the British presence.
- Moved to Iraq in the early sixties where he joined the Arab Nationalists Movement. He was active among the Omani students and presided over the Omani Student Union chapter in Baghdad.
- Played a basic role in founding the National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (1970). He played a leading role in the armed struggle in Jabal El Akhab and in the battles of "Azki and Nazou".
- Played a prominent role in unifying the revolutionary forces in the area which resulted in the foundation of a unified struggle front — The People's Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf. (Dec. 1971).
- Lead the workers uprising in Sept. 1971 in Muscat.

The following are excerpts from the Political Program and the National Action Program of the PFLO, adopted during its last congress.

We condemn every Arab regime standing by the side of Qaboos and the Iranian invasion and extending military assistance under any justification. We consider this as high national treason and collusion with Iranian and British invaders and occupationists. We ask all the patriotic and progressive forces and the Arab masses to expose these treacherous stands and to stand clearly by the side of our people and their just revolution. We see the duty of all Arab countries which call for preservation of the Arab national character of Oman and the Arab Gulf as standing by the side of the Omani revolution, to condemn the Iranian invasion and the Qaboosian treason and to give all help to our people and their just struggle.

The congress having confronted the whole of the previous conditions the results of the comprehensive discussions amongst the rank and file and leadership resulted in the following resolutions:

1. Organizational independence for the organization of PFLOAG in the

political entities in the area, and the right to form its regional policies and programmes as required by the regional Political conditions.
2. Organization of the branches of PFLOAG existing in the regions of Oman into the framework of an independent national organization under the name of the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman. (PFLO).
3. Establishment of the National Action Program and Constitution of the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman.
4. Election of a central command for the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman.

Organizational independence is a task dictated by the nature of the present conditions in order to:

- to mobilize all Omani and Arab capabilities to face the Iranian invasion and British presence.
- to bring closer the hour of national salvation to this valuable part of our nation.
- to be capable of putting forward policies and programmes in the other regions suited to development of conditions there.

Although this is necessary in this stage, we reiterate at the same time that our absolute conviction in the unity of the areas and the necessity of uniting all its national forces is a strategic matter not only dictated by the present and future confrontation with the local, imperialist and expansionist Iranian enemy but also by the rapid social and economic development which pushes towards political unity despite the big obstructions laid by the rulers of the Emirates to consolidate disunity and despite the stumbling block laid by the imperialists and other reactionary regimes to hold on to their interests. Therefore, the national forces in Oman and the Arab Gulf areas are called upon to take into consideration the historical path of development and to take the highest forms of support and unity amongst themselves and create organizational structures capable of consolidating their abilities to face the dangers surrounding them and holding on to the gains achieved during its long struggle against the imperialists and reactionaries.

Our Omani people have struggled for long years and will continue to struggle using all means to raise the following objectives:

ONE: LIBERATORY OF OMAN FROM ALL FORMS OF COLONIAL OCCUPATION AND PRESENCE AND REALISATION OF INDEPENDENCE. TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL, IT IS NECESSARY TO:

1. Cancel all the secret and open boundary treaties with the United Kingdom and other imperialist States.

2. Remove all the British, American and Iranian bases from the Omani mainland and occupied islands.
3. Withdraw all the British, Iranian and mercenary forces and the relief of all the foreign officers and advisers in Oman.

TWO: ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL DEMOCRACY THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEANS:

1. To abolish the tribal Sultanic rule based on inheritance within the client Al-Busaid family.
2. To establish the People's Democratic Republic based on the power and the alliance of the working Omani national democratic people.
3. To establish a popular elected legislative assembly on truly democratic bases. This assembly is to lay down a progressive constitution for the country.

POLITICAL

THREE: TO PROVIDE ALL POLITICAL AND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEANS:

1. The release of all political prisoners and the liquidation of the British, American, Jordanian and Iranian secret police ensuring stability and content for the masses.
2. Abolition of the martial law imposed on most of the provinces of Oman and to demolish the barbed wire fences built around the coastal line in order to allow the citizens to move freely between the country-side and the capital.
3. To ensure the return of all the democratic elements among whom are these forced out of the country due to its activities.
4. To ensure the freedom of the Press, grouping and speech for all the national Omani masses.

FOUR: TO FOLLOW A CORRECT ECONOMIC POLICY ENSURING THE PEOPLES CONTROL OVER THEIR WEALTH AND DEDICATING IT FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. THIS REQUIRES THE FOLLOWING:

1. The nationalization of oil companies to ensure the full control of the people and to abolish all incompetent concessions signed by the trainmen's rulers thus dedicating the national wealth for building an independent national economy serving our people and our nation and humanity out of oil company's control. These companies are looting huge profits at the expense of our people for the fact they are manipulating world prices.

2. To establish strong national industry using the huge national and natural wealth in our country. These wealth which should not be left to the foreign companies which extract these wealth for the foreign monopolies and the local ruling traitors.
3. To establish a state bank and nationalizing the insurance companies and the foreign banks, controlling the national economy, and the insurance companies.
4. To expand the exchange between Oman and the other states which respect the independence and sovereignty of Omani people on their soil arising of equality and common interests.
5. To develop animal and marine wealth and to establish by-products industry.

FIVE: TO LIBERATE THE FARMER FROM THE FECUAL BACKWARD RELATIONS AND TO FOLLOW A CORRECT AGRARIAN POLICY FOR RAISING THE STANDARD OF THE FARMERS IN ORDER TO SERVE NATIONAL ECONOMY. TO ACCOMPLISH THIS, IT IS NECESSARY TO:

1. To apply a law of agrarian reform ensuring the farmers to benefit from the land. To apply the motto (the land for the toilers) without discrimination due to tribal, race or any other reasons.
2. To confiscate the land granted to the foreign companies and the foreign colonialists, and to distribute these lands to the farmers.
3. To reclaim the virgin land and to distribute it to the farmers giving concern to underground water for development and irrigation system in the country.
4. To encourage the farmers cooperatives and to furnish them with seeds, fertilizers and agricultural equipments.
5. To help the farmers develop the agricultural production.

The Ethiopian situation and the Question of Eritrea

The recent execution in Ethiopia of sixty personalities is a turning point in the coup d'État of February 1974. The "quiet revolution" is now over and a new period of confrontation is beginning. It is clear now that it was only a matter of time before the contradictions within the military brass appeared. One of the reasons that delayed the break-up was the student-worker demonstrations that kept demanding a civilian government.

The coup started as a mildly radical one, ready to compromise on issues and with forces. It was a chance for the military to put aside the critical issues that are facing Ethiopia. The most important of these are, the Eritrean question, the spreading famine, the necessity for agricultural reform and the corruption in the state. The recent events although overshadowing these, are the result of them.

One can compare the Ethiopian experience now, with that of Egypt in 1953 and '54. A struggle for power amongst the officers while the political line remains a mystery not only to the outside world but also to the Ethiopian people. The force that most suffers from this situation is the Eritrean revolution and its official body, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) which agreed to open negotiations with the new Ethiopian regime, on the condition that the regime recognise the ELF as the sole representative of the Eritrean people.

The New “Ethiopia” and the Eritrean Question

The ELF started its military operations in 1962, when the province was integrated with Ethiopia. During past history, like many other entities, Eritrea was under Ottoman colonisation until 1865, when it came under British administration located in Egypt. Its importance at that time stemmed from plans to open the Suez Canal reaching the Red Sea, on whose mouth lies Eritrea. In 1885 Italy occupied the region in an attempt to share the wealth of Africa with the other colonialist countries. After World War II, Britain inherited the colonisation of the area as a result of the peace treaty signed with Italy in 1947. The same year, a meeting of the foreign ministers of the four Great Powers was held in London to consider the disposal of Italy’s former colonies. Egypt then countered the Ethiopian claim to the territory, and defended Eritrea’s independence.

But the status of Eritrea was settled to Ethiopia’s satisfaction when in 1950 the United Nations adopted a plan for federation between Eritrea and Ethiopia under the Ethiopian crown. A two-year transitional period was decided upon, and in September 1952, Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia. Ten years later the integration took place.

All of the above actions were taken against the will of the Eritrean people, denying them the right to self-determination. This 119,000 sq. km. with a population of 13 million enjoys a very important strategic position for it lies on the Red Sea and is Ethiopia’s only outlet to the ocean. It is also rich in agricultural products, animal wealth, minerals and oil.

The struggle in Eritrea started with ten fighters having between them the World War II rifles. The ELF held its first Congress in 1962, and in 1963 its first major attack took place at Hieoteh — this resulted in the capture of fifty rifles, from the Ethiopian army. The development of the struggle lead to the integration of the large poor-peasant class under the leadership of the ELF.

The ELF, which is now split into two organisations, the Revolutionary Council (RC) and the Popular Liberation Forces (PLF) has not been able to

reach a formula to unite **On november 27th, 1974, Saleh Osman Sa-bey, the official spokesman of the ELF called on the "sisterly Arab countries to help the ELF to unify its ranks because the conflicts within the Front reflect to a great extent the conflicts within the Arab countries"**

Sabbey referred to the execution of General Aman Andom, the former head of the military council in Ethiopia, who was of Eritrean origin and who favoured a negotiated settlement with Eritrea. He said that he now expected an escalation of Ethiopian action against the Eritrean rebels and added, **that the rebels were well equipped to defend themselves and wage "a war of harassment" against Ethiopian troops in the major cities. Agency reports from Asmara have reported large movements of Ethiopian troops into Eritrea. A major offensive by the troops against the ELF is said to be planned by the new leadership**. When Andom was deposed by Major Mengistu Hiale Mariam, some observers noted the similarity of the event with that of Nasser deposing Nagib in 1954. As with Nasser, Major Mengistu is thought to be the engineer of the coup. Andom maintained an open respect for the legal and constitutional processes in steering the work and actions of the military council and had never made any attempt to seize personal power from the committee members.

The policy gap between Andom and the committee widened to a gulf in the last few weeks. For example, he is known to have been reluctant to go along with the controversial campaign to get "students and teachers out into the rural areas to educate the masses". A move whose suspected purpose is to keep students and teachers away from the political life of the capital, where they have demonstrated for a civilian government.

This is not expected to be the last of the splits among the new young officers who took over from the "lion of Sheba" in a society that suffers from problems that have piled up since the 14th-century and which faces a strong national liberation movement waging armed struggle. It remains to be seen who of the 120 man armed forces coordinating committee will emerge to lead Ethiopia into the modern world. The world of realities: the independence of Eritrea and the struggle to supply Ethiopia with food for the masses who suffer most from the famine.

Cabanas: Personification of Mexican Resistance

The right wing of Latin America has come to recognize that the only way they can ensure their survival is through conducting an intensive campaign of terror against the regional democratic and progressive forces. One can readily point to the repression that the people of Chile experience at the hands of the fascist military junta. In its eternal quest to stem the revolutionary spirit of the Chilean people, the junta on October 5, 74, killed the first secretary-general of MIR. MIGUEL ENRIQUEZ. The junta, however, is still haunted by the organized resistance to fascism, which has grown out of the Enriquez spirit: "**Let's convert our hate and anger into an organized resistance.**"

This motto has become the battle cry of Latin American revolutionaries in their struggle to halt fascism, by invoking People's rule. In Argentina, though fascism is on the rise, the regime is quite aware that the revolutionary forces like the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), led by Mario Santucho, is amassing greater strength.

More recently, the Mexican army culminated its year-long search for guerilla leader Lucio Cabanas Barrientos, by murdering him and various of his comrades on December 2, 1974, in the state of Guerrero.

Cabanas was the most known guerilla leader of Latin America since Che Guevara.

He was a school teacher who fled to the mountains of the state of Guerrero after a protest at his school developed into a confrontation with the police and resulted in 8 deaths. He first joined the group led by Jenaro Vasquez-Rojas, another of Mexico's best known guerrillas, and who was also mysteriously killed in a car wreck in 1972.

Cabanas later formed a group **Party of the Poor**, which coordinating its actions with the Vasquez Rojas group, dedicated themselves to the "total liberation of the people" of Mexico. They sought to destroy the widely-

believed myth of a stable, tranquil Mexico and to carry on the true Mexican Revolution in the tradition of Emiliano Zapata.

In a letter to the Mexican press, dated March 19, 1972, Lucio stated the reasons why they were struggling:

1. Replace the government of the rich with a government of farmers, workers, intellectuals and other revolutionaries.
2. That the new government provide laws protecting the rights and interests of the people: right to vote, assemble, form unions, and political parties.
3. To make these laws and protect interests, for workers to form own tribunals, select own judges, and arm themselves.
4. Expropriate lands and factories and other holdings from the rich nationals and non-citizens.
5. Give workers the true value of their products and provide financial security for the families.
6. That workers control all communication media and offer educational and informational programs for the poor.
7. Enforce right of people to adequate housing, education, health, culture, leisure time at no cost.
8. Give women equal rights in work, pay, voice in government. Protect children's rights to good food, clothing, child care, and education.
9. Provide old people and the sick with special housing and care, free food and clothing, adequate work and education. Provide prisoners, whose imprisonment is caused by poverty or sickness, with a better life, protection against torture and maltreatment right to opinions, paid work, education, health care, and right to return-to-society as free men-andwomen (workers) after serving sentence.
10. Protect right of professional workers and technicians to improve their ability to serve the working people. Right of artists to create and to further the spiritual progress of people.
11. Protect rights of Indian campesinos driven to the mountains by Spanish. Unite in fight against discrimination with whole world, especially Chicanos, Blacks and other racial minorities in the U.S.
12. Work for complete economic independence of Mexico.

The El-Partido de Los Pobres (Party of the Poor) has planted the seeds for a revolutionary movement in the countryside. To complement it, the first nationwide guerilla organization has emerged under the banner of the "communist league of Sept. 23." The combined and joint efforts of the rural-urban struggle have produced new objective conditions that have profoundly disturbed Mexican politics, particularly in Mexico city, Guadalajara, Monterrey and Culiacan.

What seems obvious is that once organized resistance takes firm root among the masses, setbacks such as the death of companero Cabanas though painful, can never arrest the revolutionary process.

The Legal basis of Capitulation

While the fate of peoples is not determined by purely legal agreements, it is, nevertheless, important to consider the effect of certain legal agreements on the possible course of future events. Regardless of well-phrased legalities, historical contradictions have a way of reasserting themselves and breaking through such legalities.

The following article outlines some of the political consequences that flow from any kind of legal "settlement" of the question of Palestine.

The proposed settlement for the so-called Arab–Israeli conflict involves more than one aspect. Its basis is United Nations Security Council resolution 242. This resolution involves Israel on one side and the Arab countries on the other — Egypt, Syria, and Jordan (Lebanon is not yet involved in resolution 242 but is involved in the cease-fire of 1949). Our concern in this article is the legal effects of a settlement on the Palestinian cause. A settlement as perceived here is the termination of the state of war.

Resolution 242 calls among other things for "peace" in the area on two basis:

1. **Israel should withdraw from all territories occupied during the June war of 1967.**
2. **In return, Arab states are to recognize and respect the sovereignty of all existing states in the area including Israel.** In addition, the resolution affirms the right of these states to political independence, peaceful existence, and secure borders without threats or use of force. The resolution leaves open the method and terms of application.

Inspite of all the developments that took place since the adoption of resolution 242 (November 1967), it still remains the basis of the settlement, not considering such events as the emergence of Palestinian resistance and the October war of 1973. Security Council resolution 338 taken during the October war does not add nor change 242. It is merely a repetition of it.

The termination of the state of war in international law is the legal preparation for establishing peace between two conflicting parties. This

demands an end to all military Operations and all actions involved for the preparation of a war, such as mobilizing or concentrating troops on the borders, support for irregular forces that penetrate the enemy territories; it also implies the end of economic boycott and other acts such as forbidding the enemy use of water or air passage. Different from it is the cease-fire which allows such measures and limit the agreement to military aspects. In other words the termination of the state of war requires natural relationships based on mutual respect and mutual recognition of the sovereignty of each state over its land.

In international law there are four methods that lead to a termination of the state of war:

1. **Capitulation**: In other words submission of one of the parties to the other — without demanding a legal recognition — that is to end the sovereignty of a state on the land it exists on, and to annex these territories to that of the victorious party after destroying the army of the defeated state. Such cases are rare in history — examples: Ethiopia in 1936 and Nazi Germany in 1945.
2. **To Abstain from Military Operations**: In case all parties abstain from military operations and" move towards establishing peaceful relations without signing a peace treaty; in other words, the termination of war is declared by One side, with the other declaring its acceptance of the new situation.
3. **The Peace Treaty**: All sides reach a peace treaty after terminating military Operations, that includes the methods and conditions of application.
4. **International Mediation**: This is the case where a third party, the United Nations or the Security Council may carry out a joint action according to articles 39 and 51 of the U.N. Charter.

This category is relatively new and still needs lengthy research to judge its effectiveness, particularly the cases of Palestine, Cyprus, and the Congo (Zaire). The peace treaty is considered a termination of the conflict between the parties. It deals with the details of any conflict. specifies the new borders, and several articles such as guarantees and reparations.

The Palestinian Case and The Termination of War

According to S.V. Mallison, the application of international law and the basis of international treaties have failed to work in the "Arab–Israeli" conflict, for

the Palestinian case is One without a precedent. Israel as a political phenomenon is One that international law can not apply to. It is an advanced case of settler colonialism dependant for its existence on external factors (Emigration, supplies of Arms and Capital). Since settler-colonialism is an illegal act, the issue of the land involved is tied directly to the result between the colonialist movement and the original inhabitants of the country. The state of war between the Arabs and Israel started with the attempts to establish a Zionist entity in Palestine and continued through other historical marks (the partition of 1947, the Arab–Israeli war of 1948, etc.). So the basic issue is the existence of the Zionist entity on the land of Palestine: if Arab governments recognize this entity (as proposed in resolution 242), then they are denying the Palestinians, their right to their land. As such the termination of the state of war between the Arab states and Israel will be the first step to concede Israel's existence as an entity that international law applies to. Furthermore, applying international law means that the Arab regimes concede the possibility of resolving the issue politically without force (military, economic, etc.) and thus recognizes the "legitimacy" of Israel's existence on a part of Palestinian soil. Thus obstructing the right of any Arab side to claim this as part of the Palestinian land.

"The Recognition of Israel"

Since 1917, the date of the Balfour Declaration, and through 1948 when Israel was established and recognized by the U.N., the Arab states' position was not to recognize the claim of Jews to establish a national home for themselves in Palestine or recognize the state of Israel. The position is based on well-known and clear historical and legal facts regarding the nature of Israel as a case that defies all international codes and the U.N. Charter as well. This position conceded that a recognition, simultaneously means the cancellation of the Palestinians' national rights.

This position continued to be so up to 1967, when the Arab regimes accepted resolution 242 on the basis that the national rights of the Palestinians will not be influenced by this acceptance. Still the P.L.O. rejected resolution 242 and its position was continuously reemphasized as in its last provisional program of June 8, 1974.

But for the Arab states, their position changed another time after October war of 1973. They began dealing with Israel as historical fact. **The recognition of Israel can not but be an Israeli victory — for recognition will eliminate the Palestinians' rights in the view of many and will give Israel the status of a state from the Arab side a status that has been**

denied by Arab states.

The Issue of Borders

While the Arab side calls for a complete withdrawal from all the territories Occupied in June 1967, the Israeli side hopes to withdraw from certain territories only. and definitely not all the territories occupied in June ’67. The resolution states clearly that the termination of the state of war will be on the basis of “the right of every state to live peacefully within secure and recognized borders, free from threats and acts of force”. Since the United Nations have not recognized any borders of Israel except those defined in the 1947 partition and since this area is much smaller than that occupied by Israel in 1948 and later expanded in 1950. and since the Arab states rejected the partition plan and the existence of the Zionist entity, **from all of the above it is clear that the issue of the borders is in essence the same of recognition and the right of existence. In other words, the right of Palestinians to self-determination will be given by the parties that agree to such borders on the basis of resolution 242.**

Any negotiations regarding the borders issue can not be separated from the basic position regarding the historical and national rights of the Palestinians, thus the legitimacy of Israel’s existence.

The Right of Palestinians to Self-Determination

The termination of the state of war under the present circumstances concedes Israel’s authority on the territories that it will remain on. Thus the right of self-determination will be dictated by the authority and laws of Israel. Such a situation will make it legally impossible, regardless of the maneuvers and cunning of politicians, to endorse two positions that are the negation of each other (recognition of Israel and the right of Palestinians to self-determination).

What the above means is not that it ends the Palestinians right to determine the form and shape of society they want to establish, but also denies the right of the great majority to return to the areas they came from in 1948, because it will be fully and “legally” under Israeli authority.

The Palestinian Armed Resistance

The termination of the state of war clearly means the end of all use of force and military actions by all forces — official and non-official. The emphasis on the non-official side in resolution 242 (the term is not used but implied) as a condition, compels the countries involved to take suppressive measure against the non-official forces and the political bodies leading them. To preserve the overall settlement the Arab regimes are expected to carry out their "task" of safeguarding "peace" by eliminating the Palestinian resistance or aborting the basis on which it was founded, that is, armed struggle. Equivalent to this, would be the Arab-side's eagerness to avoid retaliatory attacks by Israeli troops. Since each country will be responsible for the acts carried out by the forces on its land, thus Israel will legally hold Arab regimes responsible for resistance activities. More, each side would be legally required to put on trial and punish the elements or groups for breaking the agreement!

Conclusion

If we take objectively the possible legal form for a termination of the state of war in the areas, **it will definitely be a peace-treaty based on the results of the four wars that took place between the Arab side and the Israeli one. The treaty will not only gain its importance from the Arab countries that sign it, but also from the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Nations as well. The proposed Geneva conference (based on resolution 242) aims to reach a treaty that deals with the future of the Palestinian cause, whether a Palestinian delegation participates or not. But if a delegation does, this will legally involve the parties or organizations it represents. If it does not, the relationship between the signing parties and the Palestinians will be determined outside this forum.**

Regardless of the form the settlement takes (Geneva, bilateral agreements, or gradual negotiations), one result can come out at the present stage. That Palestine will be legally divided into two entities; one Israeli-Zionist and the other Palestinian. **This result contradicts basically with the aims of the Palestinians, their national movement, and the Arab national movement as a whole. As such, the termination of the state of war in the area without really considering the basic causes of this war (the complete national rights of the Palestinian people) will make it a legal form without any political content.** If we take, for the sake of comparison, the Paris peace agreement on Vietnam, we see that it states in the beginning: "the participant parties at the Paris conference aim to terminate war and restore peace in Vietnam on the basis of the Vietnamese people right to self

determination". Even though there are differences between the Palestinian case and the Vietnamese one, the principle holds. Since the Palestinians are uprooted from their land and because of the historical and national rights they hold, the right to self determination and the Zionist entity are two things that can not meet; they are the negation of each other in this case. The only way the Palestinians can regain their rights and apply the right of self determination is the way to establish a democratic Palestinian society. **Any peace that will not take into consideration the reasons that lead to force, will remain a superficial one that does not take in consideration the scientific factors that govern the conflict. It will be a peace of states and governments (even organizations!) but not one of peoples and societies. The basic conclusion is that a settlement will legally hinder the Palestinian cause for sometime, as such it should be rejected.**

Baghdad Oil Symposium urges: Cooperation between Producers, Developing Nations

The second Baghdad International Oil Symposium, organized by the Iraqi National Peace and Solidarity Council in collaboration with the World Peace Council and the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization, has urged oil-producing developing and socialist countries to cooperate. The four-day meeting which began on November 1st, brought together 110 leading personalities from 53 countries and organizations, and can be seen as the "leftist" answer to efforts to bring down oil prices.

The reason for the symposium was explained by Iraqi Minister of State Aziz Sharif, who is also the Secretary General of the Iraqi National Peace and Solidarity Council and chief organizer of the Symposium. Sharif pointed out that a lot had happened since the first Baghdad international symposium, which was held in 1972, "Because of the October (1973) war", Sharif said, "because of the acts of various Arab oil-producing countries, because of the rise in the price of oil and the rise in the prices of other materials in the world, it was obvious that the subject of oil had acquired new dimensions which had to be analyzed."

Items for discussion on the Symposium agenda were nationalization, oil cartels, the energy crisis the use of oil resources for economic development, and the use of oil as a weapon "in the struggle against imperialism and Israeli aggression."

Developing Nations

The communique issued at the end of the Symposium underlined the dangers of "**piling up billions and tens of billions of dollars representing excess oil revenue in the banks of the powerful capitalist nations. These banks are completely coordinated with the oil companies and other**

companies of various nationalities. Transferring the oil funds to these banks or to central banks in the capitalist countries is practically the same as giving the oil away free."

The conference noted that these surplus revenues should be used instead to "to help the developing countries that need oil." The Symposium noted that inter-Arab military-economic aid was one example, and that another was Venezuela's plan to help the Latin American countries.

It added: "One of the most important matters is **to set the basis for cooperation between the oil-producing countries and the developing countries that import oil.** The aspects of this cooperation could include agreements to exchange oil for raw materials, food stuffs and industrial products, as well as joint industrial plans that would provide for the division of labor, and special arrangements for deferred payment."

In a speech before the conference, whose slogan was "**Oil and Raw Materials for Economic Development, Social Progress and Economic Relations on an Equal Footing**," Iraqi Oil Minister Saadoun Hammadi called on the Arab oil-producing states to invest their surplus funds in the developing countries and to free these funds from monetary fluctuations due to their association with the capitalist states' economy.

A good deal of attention was focused at the Symposium on Iraqi's oil policy, which freed the country's oil industry from imperialism by nationalizing the interests of foreign companies, as well as the role Iraq played in aiding developing countries. This, Dr. Hammadi said, Iraq had done by providing substantial financial aid to a number of developing countries through bilateral agreements. He called on the Arab oil states to provide loans on easy terms to the developing countries and to work out a system of economic integration with them that would help them to industrialize their economy.

Socialist Bloc

The conference noted that the technical and other aid provided by the socialist countries was different from that of the capitalist countries because the socialist countries did not interfere in the internal affairs of those they aided. The conference also dealt in detail on "setting a new understanding for the many-faceted cooperation between the oil-producing countries, the non-oil producing developing countries and the socialist countries."

The conference communique noted that the "industrial situation of the socialist countries was such that they could now offer the developing

countries equipment and know-how at the best conditions, without any political interference, as well as the markets for the products of these countries."

It added: "The surplus revenues of the oil-producing countries can be used in these threeway arrangements. They (the oilproducing countries) can set up development relations with the socialist countries to export technical equipment and to provide know-how and training to carry out the long-range plans of… the oil-producing countries."

"At the same time" it went on, "the exports by the socialist countries to the non-oil producing countries will lessen their balance of payment problems and help them… to speed up their development programs."

The enemy U.S. Corporate beast

Boycott

The role of oil as a weapon was also discussed at the conference. One of the papers, by Dr. Atef Suleiman, a Palestinian covered US interest in Arab oil. The author estimated that US import of Arab oil before the October war was about 2 million barrels daily; this oil, he said, came from direct sources and from indirect ones, such as refineries in Europe. This amount represented 32% of US oil imports, Suleiman said, but only 12% of US oil consumption.

As for the Arab oil boycott against the US, started during the October War, Suleiman noted that the boycott had been lifted without Arab demands having been met, and before the Americans really began to feel its effect.

But what was more important than the oil itself, Suleiman said, was its role in US economy. He said that American oil companies were in control of 60% of Arab oil, and that their profits from these operations were estimated in the US balance of payments, at 2 billion dollars annually.

Certainly the 2nd International Oil Symposium can be seen as the Iraqi answer to American-led efforts to bring down oil prices and to bring about a unified consumers' stand, as well as American threats on the alleged role Arab oil and funds are playing in international inflation.